

WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY

STANDARDS COMMITTEE

18th May 2009

1. CASE SUMMARIES

Report of the Monitoring Officer.

RECOMMENDED

THAT members note the contents of the report and the case summaries and consider any issues for the Authority.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 From Spring 2008 the Standards Committee has had responsibility for much of the casework relating to the ethical standards framework. This Authority has not actually received any complaints about member misconduct.

2.2 As well as complying with legislation and guidance the Standards Committee will need to demonstrate learning from issues arising from local investigations and determinations. Further it would be advisable for Standards Committee to be kept informed of any particularly notable cases which are publicised by the Standards Board or the Adjudication Panel as they may also add to learning at the local level. It is important to note the type of cases where either there is found to be no breach or where it is determined that no action should be taken as well as cases where sanctions are imposed.

3. BACKGROUND

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- 3.3 The Case Summary at Appendix 1 concerns a member of Harlow District Council. It was alleged that the member failed to treat others with respect and brought his office or authority into disrepute. The Ethical Standards Officer took the view that the member failed to treat the officer with respect and had breached the Code of Conduct. However, the member's behaviour was not of a nature that brought his office or authority into disrepute.
- 3.4 The case summary at Appendix 2 concerns a councillor from the Wiltshire and Swindon Fire Authority. It was alleged that the member amongst other things unlawfully discriminated against others, failed to treat others with respect and brought their office into disrepute. The ethical standards officer concluded that the member did not fail to comply with the Code of Conduct and that no further action was necessary.
- 3.5 The case summary at Appendix 3 concerns a councillor from the Cleveland Police Authority. The ethical standards officer found that the behaviour was not sufficiently serious to amount to disrespect and no action needed to be taken.

4. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

In preparing this report an initial Equality Impact Assessment is not required and has not been carried out.

5. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

By considering national cases of significance the Standards Committee will be better informed and placed to discharge duties in relation to local assessments, reviews, referrals, investigations and determinations. It is as important to note the type of cases where investigation and action is not considered appropriate as it is to look at the cases which contain serious breaches of the Code of Conduct.

6. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Case Summaries and Press Releases – Standards Board for England.

**N SHARMA
MONITORING OFFICER**